

How to prepare your office for re-opening



This checklist will help you create a safe and healthy working environment in the post-pandemic era.

Slowly but surely, most countries are loosening their quarantine rules. For many of us, it will mean coming back to the office. Some people have already returned to their workplace. But just like our personal habits, the working routine will be completely different now. But how can we make our offices pandemic-proof? This checklist will help you with that.

1. Control the occupancy



Checklist

- ☐ **Establish a maximum capacity**
Depending on the office size, you can safely accommodate a limited number of people. In general, the fewer people are in the office at once, the better. Determine the maximum capacity of your office and make sure that you don't exceed it at all times.
- ☐ **Adjust working schedules**
Encourage people to work in shifts or reduce in-office hours. As a result, fewer people will be on the location an any given time.
- ☐ **Implement a no-visitor policy**
Allow only employees into the office and replace all business visits with video calls.
- ☐ **Limit the use of common areas**
Just like the office, every room can accommodate a certain number of people. Establish a maximum capacity for all meeting rooms, canteens and other common areas.

2. Limit close contacts



Checklist

☐ Start with distancing

The official regulations differ per country, but in most cases, the required distance between people is 1.5 or 2 meters (6 ft). Make sure people don't encounter each other at a distance shorter than that. Space out the working desks and seating in common areas. Remove all unnecessary furniture (for instance, leave only 4 chairs in the meeting room and place them on sufficient distance).

☐ No physical contacts

Encourage employees to avoid handshakes, hugs and other physical contacts when interacting with each other.

☐ Create one-way traffic

People usually bump into each other in busy areas, like entrances, stairs and coffee machine. Where possible, create a one-way flow with special markings on the floor and walls.

3. Adjust office design



Checklist

☐ Space out workstations

Make sure there is sufficient distance between the workstations. Again, take into account the official requirements in your country. Where possible, locate employees at separate desks. If your office has shared tables, work out a seating scheme that will follow the above-mentioned rule.

☐ Keep doors and passages open

Where possible, fix the doors open or remove them completely to prevent people from using door handles. Same goes for sliding doors.

☐ Free up corridors and passages. If your office has narrow corridors and passages, free them from furniture and other objects so that people could pass each other safely.

☐ Add space partitioning

In addition to distancing, you can add dividers at shared desks to separate people from each other. In open spaces, you can create barriers between people with room dividers. These can be also used to facilitate routing in busy areas.

4. Add extra sanitary measures



Checklist

- ☐ **Increase regular cleaning**
You will have to revisit your cleaning schedule. Pay special attention to frequently touched surfaces. Door handles, taps, phones, coffee machines and should be disinfected several times a day.
- ☐ **Minimise shared use**
Where possible, make sure that people don't use the same objects. For instance, impose assigned seating instead of hot desking. Make one person responsible for answering the calls. Replace hand towels with paper tissues, think of disposable kitchen supplies.
- ☐ **Encourage people to watch their personal hygiene**
Remind your employees to thoroughly wash their hands by putting instructions in the bathroom. Place hand sanitizers in the busy areas, for instance, at the entrance. You can also offer face masks.
- ☐ **Improve air quality**
Make sure that there is sufficient air circulation in the building. If possible, implement air cleaning systems.

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